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THE
SLY SUBSCRIPTION;
ON THE
NORFOLK MONARCH, &c.

To which is Added,
The BRITON's Speech to Sir POLITICK;

(Price One Shilling.)

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From the PREFACE.

If there be in the World a Wretch in Office, who has built his own Fortune upon the Ruin of Thouſands of his Fellow-Subjects (the meaneſt of whom is more honeſt, *and as* well born *as himſelf) this Monſter, like a Beaſt of Prey that has worried the whole Flock, ought, in common Juſtice, to be hunted down and deſtroy'd.*

From PAGE 20.

On Tyburn.

* *Could'ſt Thou but* Judge, *as well as* Execute,
How often would'ſt thou change the Felon's *Doom,*
And hang *the treach'rous S —— m in his Room?*

LONDON:
Printed for T. TIEBITT, and ſold at the Pamphlet-ſhops of *London* and *Weſtminſter*. 1733.
(Price One Shilling.)

SIX SUBSCRIPTIONS

ON THE

To the Honourable

William Poultney, *Esq;*

Honourable Sir,

I MUST own I ſhall want your Pardon for the Preſumption of throwing theſe Sheets at your Feet, without firſt obtaining Leave to warrant me in it: A Pre-

A Preſumption which is owing to my Unhappineſs in not being perſonally known to You, and at a Loſs how to be introduc'd to *Your Honour.*

IT is, indeed, in ſome ſort a Crime againſt Ceremony; but a much leſs Crime than thoſe *Dedicators* commit, who abuſe a *Great Man* with his *Own Leave*, by libelling him with *Praiſes*, which every body are ready to agree he has no Title to.

FLATTERY, *Great Sir*, is not deſign'd to have any Portion in this Addreſs; there are

are Reasons, for which *Your Honour* is more strongly entitled to these Sheets than any other Person in *England*: And for those Reasons only, they are with all Humility inscrib'd to You. It is *Your Honour*'s Zeal and vigorous Behaviour, in the greatest Assembly in *Europe*, that draw this Address of Thanks upon You.

IT was observ'd, to the eternal Praise of *Cicero*, that he was *resolute* and *bold* in the Senate; Virtues at that Time peculiarly necessary, when the Criminals were of such Power and Sufficiency,

as

as to be able to ſhock the State. May *Your Honour* have the *Secret*, as you have the *Reſolution*, of this great Man: And Heaven enable you to ſtand by, and be as true an Advocate for the Rights and Liberties of your Countrymen for Times to come, as you have been, upon all Occaſions, in thoſe paſt, which is the ſincere Prayer of

Your Honour's moſt
Devoted and Obedient
Humble Servant,

Britannicus.

THE PREFACE.

IT was an old Law among the Locrians *of* Italy, *as we are inform'd by very good Authorities*, that the Man who propos'd to make any New Law, should be oblig'd to do it with a Rope about his Neck, in which he was to be Strangled forthwith, if he fail'd carrying his Point, and the Majority determined his Propoſition prejudicial to the Publick.*

I don't find that there is any ſuch Cuſtom now ſubſiſting in any Part of Chriſtendom; *and the Reaſon, perhaps, may be, becauſe all our neighbouring Monarchies are abſolute, and their Laws made by Edicts of the King only. Had this peculiar Cuſtom obtain'd in our Conſtitution, I am in Doubt whether the Advantage, or Prejudice of it, would have been greater.*

On the one Hand, it would rid us of a Number of buſy Fools (for Fools will be meddling, let the

Conſequence

* Diod. Sic. Polyb. Hier. apud Strobæum Demoſthen. in Timocratem, *&c.*

Conſequence be never ſo hazardous) and it would contribute to deter Knaves (who have ever little private Veins of their own) from offering their Schemes to the Ruin of the Publick; as on the other hand, indeed, it might hinder juſt and wiſe Men from promoting Laws for the Good of their Country; ſince none are ſo diffident of their own Parts and Opinions, as Men of ſound Senſe and ſolid Judgment.

With us every Member of the Legiſlature is at Liberty to propoſe what he eſteems to be for the Intereſt of the Subject; which being conſider'd and weigh'd by the whole Body, whenever a Difference of Opinion ariſes, they are immediately to divide, and the Matter is carried, or rejected, by the Majority: And, certainly, it is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that there is moſt Wiſdom, moſt Honour, and moſt Virtue, in the greater Number.

It muſt be a Comfort to every Sufferer in this Calamity, who gave a Vote for the Election of a Member, to ſee his Repreſentative in Parliament bravely labouring to do him Juſtice, by ſtrongly oppoſing any Thing that ſo directly ſtrikes at the Liberty of the Subject. Nor will the Names of thoſe Honourable *Members be forgot to Poſterity, who ſhall exert themſelves upon this Occaſion. I have ſomewhere read a Story of a Member of the Houſe of Commons, who, when a Bill was brought in by the Court-Party, which he judg'd would be of pernicious Conſequence to the People, oppos'd it with all the Vehemence and Intereſt imaginable; and when the Tide of its Abettors run too ſtrong againſt him, finding his Honeſt Endeavours to no purpoſe, he petition'd the Houſe, that the*

the Borough, *for which he ſerv'd, might be exempted from that Law. Pity it is, that his Name is not recorded to Poſterity; and that he has not a Monument of Marble to perpetuate the Memory of ſo glorious an Integrity! Nor Gold, nor Preferment, could bribe him ſo much as to be ſilent in a Cauſe, where the Duty of a Patriot commanded him to ſpeak.*

Upon the Mention of this worthy Gentleman, I cannot help looking back on ſome noble City Members of our own, who gave their Opinions againſt this pernicious Scheme with ſo much Candour and Strength of Argument; and who, like Prophets, foreſee the Miſchiefs that inevitably muſt follow, ſhould it ever take place. I don't INSIST, *that every* HONOURABLE MEMBER *did not* THINK *he was ſerving his Country, while he promoted this* PROJECT; *but I can't help giving the Preference to the Wiſdom of thoſe, who ſaw Effects at ſuch a Diſtance, and diſcover'd the Traces of Villany and Miſchief lurking under the Maſquerade of Publick Service, and the Intereſt of the Nation.*

It has often happen'd in private, as well as civil Life, that we will not believe the Danger of Things till the Evil is come upon us. It puts me in mind of a Fable in Æſop, very much apropos *to our Circumſtances.*

There was a Country Fellow at work a ſowing his Grounds, and a *Swallow* (being a Bird famous for Providence and Foreſight) call'd a Company of little Birds about her, and bad them take good notice what the Fellow was a doing. You muſt know (ſays the Swal-

low) that all the Fowler's Nets and Snares are made of Hemp or Flax; and That's the Seed that he is now a ſowing. Pick it up in time, for fear of what may come on it. In ſhort, they put it off, till it took Root; and then again, till it was ſprung up into the Blade. Upon this, the Swallow told them once for all, that it was not yet too late to prevent the Miſchief, if they would but beſtir themſelves, and ſet heartily about it; but finding that no heed was given to what ſhe ſaid, ſhe e'en bad Adieu to her old Companions in the Woods, and ſo betook herſelf to a City Life, and to the Converſation of Men. This Flax and Hemp came in time to be gather'd, and wrought, and it was this *Swallow*'s Fortune to ſee ſeveral of the very ſame *Birds* that ſhe had *forewarn'd, taken in Nets, made of the very Stuff ſhe told them of.* They came at laſt to be ſenſible of the Folly of ſlipping their Opportunity; but they were loſt beyond all Redemption firſt.

I have but one thing more to add, and then ſhall conclude my Preface. It was very juſtly obſerv'd in a late Paper, the Reputation of which is every Day riſing in Town, that the Security of Property, and the Freedom of Speech, always go together in Free Governments: But to do publick Miſchief, without hearing of it, is only the Prerogative and Felicity of Tyranny.

I may

I may be thought, perhaps, by ſome, to ſpeak with too much Liberty in the following Diſcourſe; but let them remember, that if there be any thing either in the Arguments *or* Examples, *which tallies with the* Conduct *and* Characters *of Perſons* living, *I make no Application. If any body has a mind to take the Scandal to Himſelf, much Good may it do him.*——Qui capit, ille facit.

THE

THE

Sly SUBSCRIPTION, &c.

As privately handed about by ſeveral

Perſons of QUALITY.

Moſt Grand Monarch,

I ſhall begin this Diſcourſe with a very noble, and at this Juncture, no leſs ſeaſonable Obſervation, though it be in Fact of a much later Date than what is pretended.

Zaleucus, the Law-giver of the *Locrians* (and who, like many of our preſent Set of Lawgivers, was at firſt of a very mean Deſcent and Expectations) is made to introduce that Syſtem, which he compiled for the Uſe of his Countrymen, with this formal Preface: *That every Member of a Common-wealth, in the firſt place, ought to believe there are Gods; which they will be convinc'd of, by looking up to Heaven and the World, and conſidering the Beauty and Order*

Order of all Things there. The Conſequence of this Perſuaſion ſeem'd to him, that we ſhould thereby be oblig'd to honour the Divine Powers, and have a ſtricter Regard to our own Actions and Conduct; that we ſhould ſhew much leſs Reaſon, than we are willing to allow our ſelves, if, while we obſerv'd ſo juſt and beautiful a Regularity above, we could ſuffer our ſelves to be ſo wild and eccentric, as I may ſay, in our Motions below.

Now, the neareſt Pretence that we have of imitating this Divine Regularity, muſt be by the Proviſion of good and wholeſome Laws——LAWS, eſtabliſh'd by the Wiſdom, and not the *Caprice* of the Legiſlators——LAWS promoted neither by *Party Intereſt*, nor *Party Paſſions*, where the Honour and Safety of the Government is principally conſider'd, and the *Sanctity of Power*, and *Private Right*, are equally guarded.

It has happen'd in all Countries, that the Prince very often has been a greater Stranger to the Conſtitution than his Miniſters; and from this Misfortune it has as often happen'd, that Corruption and oblique Deſigns have got the Start of Juſtice and a Nation's Intereſt. I DON'T SAY this is our immediate Caſe, who have a Prince, whoſe Wiſdom, and Indulgence, is diſputed by none but Jacobites.

But, let a Prince come to the Throne with all the Abilities one in that high Station was ever poſſeſs'd with, and allowing him to be well read in the Arcana's of State and Laws

of

of Nations, an inſidious Stateſman will find new Arts to ſeduce his Integrity, by putting a plauſible Gloſs upon his Meaſures, and gild them over with the popular Appearances of the Nation's Intereſt, and ſo betrays his Monarch's Love and Indulgence to his People, to ſupport and countenance the Schemes of a *diſguis'd Avariee*, and *lurking Villany*. Nor is he content to abuſe the Royal Authority merely of his own Miſrepreſentations, another Fetch of Policy is to keep the Royal Ear from being miſabus'd: His own Dependants and Minions, the *Creatures of his Favour*, and *Abettors of his Vices*, are planted about the King's Perſon, to block up and intercept the Poſſibility of Detection. I may be bold to ſay with *Cicero* upon this Head; *Ubicumque hoc factum eſt, imbrobe factum eſt; quicumque hoc fecit, ſupplicio dignus eſt.*

All Points of Guilt have ever been reckon'd to be agravated from the Quality and Circumſtances of the Perſons committing them; and the Party that, by *Truſt* and *delegated Power*, is put in a Capacity of prejudicing a *Multitude*, and actually does it, is look'd upon with more Horror and Deteſtation than a *meaner Villain*, whoſe Baſeneſs only exerciſes it ſelf on a *private Family*. The Nature of the Crimes, 'tis true, is much the ſame; but where the Injuries are moſt extenſive, there will always be the moſt Clamour; and for this Reaſon only, to wave all other, the Subornation of Witneſſes, to undermine and over-turn a private Property, will never be reckon'd to amount to a *Bribery*, *accepted* to purchaſe *Indirection* in any *National Caſe*.

It

It must be admitted that the Corruption of great Officers has been almost as old as the Constitution of the very Offices they fill'd: Human Nature is so deprav'd, and we have such a Fund of unreasonable Avarice in us, that no Augmentations of *Honour*, no large Allotment of *Salary*, no Super-addition of *establish'd Perquisites*, can confine us to the direct Road of Honesty; but we wrap and run byass into sinister Gains, and pollute our Hands and Consciences in illegal Graspings: As much the Distemper of a corrupted Mind, as Convulsions are of a disorder'd Body! It will be as easy to shew, and not impertinent to the present Purpose, that however Bribery may have prevailed in all States and Ages, it has ever been regarded with the utmost Detestation, and discountenanc'd with wholesome Severities.

I will not suppose my Readers so unacquainted with their Bible, as not to remember what numerous Injunctions there are in the Holy Text against Corruption, and the preverting of Judgment thro' Bribes. The more *Oriental* Countries, and from whom the *Hebrews* deriv'd a great part of their Laws, had I time to search so deep into Antiquity, call'd Criminals of this sort to a very strict Account. There is a remarkable Instance of this kind recorded of *Cambyses*, a Prince of many insufferable Vices, but famous for the Severity of his Government, and the Strictness of an inexorable Justice. This Prince had a particular Favourite, whom he made a *Judge*; and this *Judge* reckon'd himself so secure in

the Credit he had with his Master, that without any more ado, *Causes* were bought and sold in the Courts of *Judicature*, as openly as *Provisions* were in the *Markets*. So soon as *Cambyses* came to understand how this ungrateful Wretch had *prostituted* his *Royal Dignity* for *Gold*; together with the *Liberty* and *Property* of his People, and the *Honour* of his *Administration*; he caus'd his Minion to be taken up, and degraded, his Skin stript over his Ears, and the Seat of Judgment cover'd with it. He order'd his Son, in the Conclusion, to succeed the Father in his Character and Office; and to deliver Judgment from that very Chair; that having this Memorial of his Father's Crime and Infamy before his Eyes, he should never slip aside from the Duty of his Trust. And thus this Prince, by that severe Act of Justice, and by the Choice he made of the Son to succeed the Father, gave Proofs that his Heart was free from *Personal Malice*, and that he hated nothing that belonged to the *Judge*, except his *Villany*.

A Magistrate of suspected Honesty may be fear'd because of the Power he is invested with, but must at the same Time be hated and despis'd. The Ministers of the Gospel are oblig'd, for Example Sake, to be strict and uncorrupt in their Lives; but for much stronger Reasons the *Ministers of the State* ought to be so. The first are only to exhort, and preach against Vice; the last are to discountenance and punish it. With what Horror must we look upon a *Judge*, passing a severe Sentence upon a Criminal for *Perjury*, *Extortion*,

Extortion, or *Bribery*, if we know, that he has ever practiſed any of the ſame Crimes! It puts me in Mind of a very ludicrous Author, who, in his Addreſs to *Tyburn*, makes the following Speech to that awful Tree.

Could'ſt thou but Judge, *as well as* Execute,
How often would'ſt thou change the Felon's *Doom,*
And hang *the treach'rous S—— n in his Room?*

In all publick Caſes, where the Intereſt and Safety of the People are concern'd, it muſt be admitted, I think, that it is indifferent whether a Miniſter betrays the Prince, or his People, for a wicked Reward, to the *Enemy* in the Time of *War*; or enters into pernicious Practices by *conſederating* with a Set of *deſigning Knaves*, to raiſe an infamous great Fortune to himſelf, by *impoveriſhing* the *Subjects*, and that Way reducing them to a State of *Captivity*. I know well, the firſt is declar'd High-Treaſon by our Laws: And, I believe the laſt, were it to come upon the Tryal, would be pronounc'd ſo too. For it is one eſtabliſh'd Maxim in the Law, that *Ubi eadem eſt Ratio, ibi eadem eſt Lex.* No one Statute can foreſee or include all Circumſtances of being criminal; but where-ever there is the ſame *Reaſon* for *puniſhing*, there the *Law* ought to be the *ſame*.

In my Lord *Bacon*'s Caſe, the Puniſhment was equal to the Crime; there were Circumſtances to give a Suſpicion of Bribery, and therefore he was unqualified for the Service of the Publick. But had it been prov'd,

that he had been a private Inſtrument of Extortions; that he had been a Gainer by a Fraud, which prov'd the Ruin of Thouſands; had he taken an immenſe Sum of Money, as a *Præmium*, from wicked Men, for ſuſpending the Execution of ſome Laws, or for putting others in Execution, which he was oblig'd to do by the Duty of his Great Office; it is not to be doubted, but, in this Caſe too, his Puniſhment would have been equal to his Crime.

If there be in the World a Wretch in Office, who has built his own Fortune upon the Ruin of Twenty Thouſands of his Fellow-Subjects; (the meaneſt of whom is more *honeſt*, and as *well born* as himſelf) this Monſter, like a Beaſt of Prey that has worried the whole Flock, ought, in common Juſtice, to be hunted down and deſtroy'd.

When a Prince has the Misfortune to be ſerv'd by ſuch, as can be bound by no Ties but thoſe of *private Intereſt*, he's exactly in the Condition of thoſe Animals, which the Heathen Prieſts fed up for Sacrifice, deſtin'd to fall, whenever they can get a ſatisfactory Price for him. A *covetous* and *mercenary* Man in Office can never be *honeſt*; it is a Contradiction in Nature and common Senſe; and we may as well call an Adulterer chaſt. Our own Hiſtory, carefully examin'd, would furniſh a Number of Proofs of this Propoſition.

When King *Charles* the *Firſt*, in the Begining of his Troubles, went to *York*, his General,

General, the Earl of *Holland*, had found out a Perſon, who was willing to give him Ten Thouſand Pounds for the Procuration of a Barony. The General went immediately, and deſir'd the Dignity might be conferr'd: That Monarch, who had *very right Notions of Honour*, could not conſent to *proſtitute* the *Dignity* of *Peerage*, which was deſign'd to *diſtinguiſh thoſe*, who had *deſerv'd well of their Country*, and as a *Reward for great and virtuous Actions*, upon a *mean* and *unworthy* Perſon, therefore reſolutely thought fit to *refuſe* the Earl. The *mercenary*, *treacherous* Favourite diſſembled the Sting and Reſentment of this *Refuſal*, and parted with all the *Appearance of Loyalty, and Acquieſcence to his King's Pleaſure*: But, from that Minute, *betray'd him in all his Counſels*. Unhappy, Virtuous Monarch! who, conſulting nothing but the *Honeſty* of his own *Nature*, never believ'd any Man a *Villain* till he found him to be ſuch.

Princes have but *ſcanty*, or rather *no Opportunities* of looking into the *private Lives* of Men, the beſt and moſt certain Way of Judging of Diſpoſitions: And therefore it is no Wonder that they ſhould often be *miſtaken in the Choice of their Servants*. The Diſguiſes Men put on, to work themſelves into *Preferment*, may eaſily *deceive* a Prince, who knows them but by *Appearances*. For the *Smiles of a Courtier, and of a Harlot, have been frequently compar'd, and ſo has their Honeſty*.

Sometimes, indeed, one would think Kings very curious in the placing of their Promo-

tions;

tions; when *Birth*, *Quality*, and *diſtinguiſhing Characters* are over-look'd, and a few Men are pick'd out, from among many Millions of Subjects, and from the *Meaneſt* of the People, for the *Service* of the *Publick*. Now the Vulgar have no Reaſon to grumble at theſe Elections, and at ſeeing a Parcel of themſelves toſs'd up into a Rank that demands Reſpect: For the Prince is acknowledg'd to be the *Fountain of Honour*; and the Reſpect we are oblig'd to pay to ſuch, is to their *Office*, not to the *Men*. In all Degrees of Civil Life, there is a Kind of Civility due to the *Servant* for the Sake of the *Maſter*; but whenever any of theſe *Muſhroom Favourites* come to be degraded, our reſtrain'd Reſpect immediately breaks out into the moſt virulent Contempt.

One very fatal Conſequence, that too often attends vehement and ſudden Promotions, whether the Perſons dignified are Laymen, or of the Clergy, is, that they mount the Chariot of Preheminence like unskilful *Phaetons*, without knowing either the *Management* of the *Reins*, or the *Road* they are to drive in. The Reſult of their Ignorance is to lay down falſe Maxims of Policy to themſelves; as that the Truſt of Power is only committed to them, to be ſubſervient to the Pleaſure of the Donor, to take care that the Prince never *wants Money*, however *unjuſt* the SCHEMES for *Raiſing* it are; *(Lucri bonus eſt Odor ex re qualibet)* and, laſtly, though ever firſt in their Conſideration, to amaſs a *private Fortune to themſelves*.

I have

I have not been incurious, nor indilligent, in canvaſſing the Hiſtories of our Country, to ſee the Turn and Genius of our Anceſtors and their Times, in Circumſtances and Facts relating to the Subject now before me; for I know this Maxim to be perfectly juſt, *That Example is more prevalent than Precept.*

I have made one Obſervation, from a Survey of paſt Times, which, I believe, will be pretty generally admitted; which is, *That wherever we ſee the People's Hearts united in Love towards the Perſon of the Prince, we may, without Enquiry, be ſatisfy'd, that he is ſerv'd by Miniſters wiſe, faithful, and honeſt.* On the contrary, it is as obvious, *that almoſt all the Shocks of State, and ſignal Misfortunes of our Princes, have proceeded from, and been owing to, the Corruption of their Servants.*

There is a very particular Paſſage, I remember, in a noted *French* Author *, not a little applicable to the Premiſes, and which therefore I ſhall not ſcruple to tranſcribe. He is inſinuating (and let him anſwer for his own Poſitions) *That while an Ill Miniſtry, alledging their Maſter's Name and Countenance, commit Outrage with Impunity, though the Prince ſins not himſelf, yet he forbears not to be guilty; that his Ignorance is unpardonable, and his Patience no Virtue; and that the Diſorders which either he knows not of, or which he ſuffers, are imputed to him before God, even as if himſelf had made them. With a great deal of Reaſon, therefore* (continues he) *that Prince, who was according to God's own Heart, in expreſs*

* Ariſtippus *of Monſieur de Balzac.*

expreſs Terms deſires him, and that in the Fervency of his moſt ardent Prayers, That he would cleanſe him from ſecret Faults, and acquit him from the Sins of others: Theſe laſt Words ſignifying, *that Kings ought not to content themſelves with a* perſonal *and* particular Innocency; *and that it matters nothing for them to be juſt, if they loſe themſelves by the* Injuſtice of their Miniſters.

It is a great Queſtion with me, whether the Depravity and Vileneſs that Human Nature is capable of, do not ſhew themſelves *more conſpicuouſly in the Perſons of Stateſmen, than any other Degree of Mortals?* I ſhall give but one Reaſon for this Opinion, but one that is founded on Practice.

When they are *diſcover'd in their Deſigns, and juſtly caſt off by their abuſed Prince,* though he had rais'd them from Meanneſs and Obſcurity, their common Artifice is to employ the *Great Fortune,* which they have *ſtolen from the Publick,* in forming a Party and Faction againſt their Prince: They inſinuate, that their Diſgrace proceeded from *their Love to the People*; and, with all the wicked Arts of Ingratitude, they miſrepreſent his Honour and Juſtice; and immediately, from Perſons that deſerve to be *hang'd* as *Traytors to the Subjects,* ſet up for their *Patriots.*

Theſe violent Methods, which their Inveteracy has made uſe of, have often made weak Princes ſit down with Injuries, and content themſelves with the bare Diſmiſſion of an *over-grown Favourite.* But the Multitude

are

are not of this acquieſcing Temper; an *Indignity againſt their Honour*, or an *Incroachment on their Rights (manet alta mente repoſtum) is treaſur'd up too ſtrongly in their Reſentments to be tacitly ſlurr'd over:* And tho' the unhappy Prince has conſented to *ſhut his Eyes*, and *ſtop his Ears againſt the Corruptions of a faulty Miniſter*; his Forgiveneſs has been *worſe in its Conſequences* than the *Proſecution he dreaded to ſtir up.* We need no greater Demonſtration of This, than what actually happen'd in the Caſe of *Gaveſton*, and the Two *Spenſers*, in the Reign of *Edward* II.

The Sufferings of the People were ſo great from the Oppreſſions of theſe *wicked Favourites*, that their Diſcontents at laſt broke into an *open Rebellion.* It is ſaid, *that* Gaveſton *got poſſeſſion of the Heart of that weak Prince to ſuch a Degree, that he fill'd the Court with nothing but Buffoons, Paraſites, and ſuch vile Inſtruments of Pleaſure; and drew the King from all Thoughts of noble and worthy Enterprizes.*

By theſe Lures of Pleaſure, and Compliances to his Weakneſſes, the King's Attachment to this unworthy Minion ſo exaſperated the Nobility, that they had Recourſe to Arms; which, however, had no other Conſequence than the Death of *Gaveſton*, whom they *took and executed without any Form of Law*, notwithſtanding the King's Solicitations to ſave him; one of the Lords alledging, *that it was better he ſhould periſh ſo, than the Nation be involv'd in a Civil War.*

This might have been a Caution for Life to this unhappy Prince, not to truſt the *Reins of Power* again into the Hands of any new Favourite. Yet after this, he fell into the ſame Weakneſs with reſpect to the Two *Spenſers*, who govern'd his ductile Temper as they pleas'd. Theſe being poſſeſs'd with a Spirit of Pride and Rapine, were carried to ſuch intolerable Actions and Oppreſſions, that the People groan'd under the Tyranny of their Adminiſtration, and *Gaveſton* with good Reaſon was wiſh'd for again. This drew on a ſecond Rebellion, whoſe Event was much more fatal than the former; for the Two *Spenſers* were not only hang'd, but the King oblig'd to reſign both Crown and Dignity.

A Parliament was ſummon'd, by which it was adjudg'd and declar'd, that King *Edward* was unfit to govern the Kingdom any longer; and the following Articles were alledg'd againſt him:

That, during the Courſe of his whole Reign, he had been *miſled* and *govern'd* by *others*; who gave him *evil Counſel* to the Diſhonour of himſelf, and the Deſtruction of the *Church* and his *People*, not *conſidering* or *knowing* whether it was *good* or *evil*.

Secondly, That he would never ſubmit to good Counſel, nor the good Government of his Kingdom; but neglected the Buſineſs of the Realm, and gave himſelf to Works and Employments unbecoming his Station.

That

That by his Pride and Cruelty, he deſtroy'd the *Holy Church*, and her *Chief Miniſters*, impriſoning ſome, and diſtreſſing others; and alſo that he *executed*, *impriſon'd*, *baniſh'd*, and *diſinherited* many *Great* and *Noble* Men of the Land.

That whereas he was bound by Oath to do Juſtice to all, he only obſerv'd his *Own Profit*, and the *Avarice* of his *Wicked Counſellors*.

And, laſtly, that he *abandon'd* his Kingdom, and endeavour'd to deſtroy it, and his People; and, what was worſe, by the Default of his Perſon he was become *incorrigible*, and paſt all Hopes of Amendment: All which Charges were ſo notorious, as not to be gainſaid.

The Miſcarriages of this Prince were owing only to Nature, who had not given him a *Soul fit for Empire*; and we need only appeal to his Character for Confirmation of it, as it ſtands in our graveſt Hiſtorians.

Under this King, ſays one *, who could neither gain nor keep, *the Nation endur'd all thoſe Calamities, which could proceed from the Weakneſs and Levities of a Child. His very Nature was ſo paſſive and complying, that he ſeem'd not only to have been govern'd, but even actuated by his Favourites; who directed and carried him as they pleas'd, commanded his Perſon and Kingdom, and only made uſe of his Name, to countenance their own Villanies.* For this Prince was not,

* *Mr.* Echard's *Hiſtory of* England.

like ſome of the former, ruin'd by a violent Graſping at unlawful Power, but by meanly ſubjecting himſelf to the Power and Guidance of others. And as *Pride*, *Obſtinacy*, and *Ambition*, were the Vices that embroil'd ſome of our former Reigns; ſo *Eaſineſs*, *Complacency*, *Submiſſion*, or rather *Subjection*, where the Ruin of This. In ſhort, he was more *weak* than *wicked*; and his *Exorbitances* met with as *great*, or *greater*, in his *People*.

The Extract which I have made in Relation to this Prince, may ſeem to have withdrawn me too far from my Argument; but, I dare ſay, whoever will give themſelves the Trouble of weighing it in all its Parts, will perceive it not to be ſo diſtant from the Queſtion in Debate. If I do not all along keep religiouſly to Inſtances ariſing from Caſes of *Bribery* and *Corruption*, it will amount to the ſame, if I ſhew that Extortions in any Miniſter, and racking the People by *exorbitant* and *illegal* Demands, by the Countenance of Power, and pretended for the Service of the Prince, whenever they are conniv'd at, or paſs'd over without Cenſure and Correction, have *prov'd fatal to the Peace of the Common-wealth*.

It is an old Obſervation, that the Cuſtom of *cunning* Favourites is rather to do *great*, than *good* Actions. Great Officers are ſometimes, by the very Terms of their Promotion under Obligations of ſupplying their Prince's Neceſſities; as was the Caſe of the great Cardinal *Wolſey*, who had undertaken the King ſhould never want, as long as he might manage the *Publick*

Affairs.

Affairs. And what does this Great Man in Purſuance of theſe Conditions? He makes out Commiſſions into all the Counties of *England*, for levying the Sixth Part of every Layman's Goods, and the Fourth of the Clergy, for the particular Service of the King. The People in general were ſo diſguſted at this Extortion, that they were ready to break out into a Rebellion; alledging not only their own Poverty, but that the Commiſſions were againſt Law.

It was neceſſary that this Affair ſhould be call'd to the Queſtion; and the Cardinal was prepar'd to skreen himſelf by a ſophiſtical Apology, *That he had done nothing without firſt adviſing with the Judges*; who poſſitively affirm'd, *The King might lawfully demand any Sum by Commiſſion; and that the Counſel of State confirm'd this Method.* However this adventurous Politician's Schemes might be privately authoriz'd by his Maſter's Knowledge, the King thought it ſafer to conſult the Force of *Popular Diſcontents*, than to have a *Scrupulous* Regard to his *Stateſman*'s Character, reſolv'd to diſavow the whole Proceeding, and (by Letters to all Parts) declar'd to his People, *That he expected nothing from them but by way of Benevolence.*

Tho' Cardinal *Wolſey* might, probably, have finger'd a Part of the immenſe Sum to have been rais'd by this Project; yet the Project it ſelf neither falls under the Infamy of *Bribery* or *Corruption:* It was the Enterprize of an arbitrary Miniſter, who was confident of Impunity, and thought himſelf ſafe in the Favour, and under the Protection of his Prince; ſince the Money

Money to be collected was in his Name, and for his particular Service.

'Tis true, it was a flagrant Abuſe of Power, and a heavy and unmerciful Exaction upon the Subject: But Imputations of a later Date, if as true as they are ſuſpected and proclaim'd to be, ſtand in a very different Point of Light. To make the *Regal* Authority ſubſervient to its own *Diſhonour*, is a Boldneſs ſufficiently *black* and *ſcandalous*; but meanly to *confederate* with *Knaves* and *Mechanicks*, in a Fraud to *cheat the People*, looks more like the Vice of one bred up in the Myſteries of a *common Thief*, than the Policies of a *Stateſman*.

But if this Attempt of *Wolſey*'s, as I have above obſerv'd, does not amount to the Guilt of *Bribery* and *Corruption*, I ſhall, by an Inſtance fetch'd from a ſucceeding Reign, prove, that one, who was both an *Archbiſhop* and a *Chancellor*, negotiated the Affair of *National Bribery*, brought over the *Parliament* and *Nobility* to his Schemes, and was partial in his very *Equity* upon the Bench, to ſuch as he knew not to be of his Faction and Opinion.

When the Treaty of Queen *Mary*'s intended Marriage with the Emperor's Son, was firſt diſcover'd here at Home, the *Houſe of Commons* were much alarm'd at it, and ſent their Speaker, and Twenty of their Members, with an Addreſs to her not to marry a Stranger: In which they ſhew'd ſo much Heat and Reſentment, that the Court judg'd it neceſſary to diſſolve the Parliament.

Upon

Upon this, *Gardiner* let the Emperor know, that the Jealouſies rais'd upon Account of the Match, were ſo ſtrong, that unleſs very extraordinary Conditions were offer'd, it might occaſion a Rebellion: And he further wrote to him, that large Sums muſt be ſent over, both to gratify the Nobility, and enable them to carry the Elections in the next Parliament againſt all Oppoſers. Accordingly, there were no leſs than Four Hundred Thouſand Pounds ſent over, and *divided* at the *Diſcretion* of *Gardiner* and the Emperor's Ambaſſadors. Nor did this deſigning *Prelate* make a leſs baſe Uſe of his Power, as *Chancellor*, to oblige all People to comply with him; for, in his Court of *Chancery* no *Favour*, or *Common Juſtice*, was ſhewn to Perſons *who were not of his Intereſt.*

After this, another Parliament was choſen, but the moſt conſiderable Members were *corrupted* by *Gardiner*, who gave them *Penſions*, ſome of Two Hundred, and ſome of One Hundred Pounds a Year, on all Occaſions to ſecure their Voices; and then, it ſeems, the Articles for the *Queen*'s Marriage were digeſted, and approv'd of.

By this Example, we may ſee, when the Publick is once *corrupted*, how eaſy it is for a *wicked Miniſter* to gain his *pernicious Ends*. And this may be prov'd by an Example of a different Nature from that of *Gardiner*, which is of *Spurius Caſſius* amongſt the *Romans*. This Spurius *having ſome ambitious Deſigns in View, thought of winning over the People to his Intereſt,*

reſt, by doing them good Offices; the firſt whereof was, to ſell them thoſe Fields which the Romans *had taken from the* Hernici. *But his Ambition was ſeen thro'; ſo that when he harangu'd the People, and offer'd to give them that Money which the Corn was ſold for, (the Senate had caus'd to be brought from* Sicily) *they refuſed it, looking upon it to be a Bribe, and thinking that* Spurius *had a Deſign upon their Liberty.* But had that People been corrupted in their Natures, they could not have refuſed this Bribery; which had the Appearance of a free Donation: So that they would have open'd him that way to Tyranny, which, by their Virtue, they ſhut againſt him. But had *Spurius* liv'd in the Time of *Marius* and *Sylla*, when publick Virtue grew debauch'd, and the People were tainted with the Vices of Avarice and Luxury, he could not have miſcarried in his Deſigns: So, on the other Side, if *Sylla* and *Marius* had liv'd in the Days of *Spurius Caſſius*, their Attempts would have been cruſh'd in the very Egg. Therefore, by a Parity of Circumſtances, we may conclude, that had *Gardiner* liv'd in our Days, (tho' he was both a *Biſhop* and *Chancellor*) he would have been expoſed to Infamy, and ſuffer'd ſome ſhameful Puniſhment, for attempting, what he in his own executed with Succeſs.

Being thus let into the Myſtery of *Biſhop Gardiner*'s Conduct, there is no great Room to wonder why the Parliament never call'd him to any Account for theſe Corruptions. Had they but threaten'd any Proſecution againſt him, no doubt, he would have made their Defection publick.

publick. Or, on the other hand, if the *few* uncorrupted Members had made any Steps againſt him, or their Brethren, who were guilty *of taking the Bribes*, the ſtirring up the Diſcovery might have turn'd to their *own Confuſion*. The delinquent Party would have been alarm'd, and *join'd for their common Defence*; and, of conſequence, being the moſt *numerous*, would have *overcome*, if not *expell'd*, their *Accuſers*. *Gardiner*, therefore, ſhew'd a *maſterly Addreſs in Roguery*, when he made Thoſe, who were to be his *Accuſers* and *Judges*, *Partners in one common Bribery with him*.

The Reflections, that naturally ariſe from ſuch a Circumſtance, call to my mind a beautiful Sentiment in one of *Shakeſpear*'s Plays. A *corrupt Judge* having ſentenc'd a Man to die for *debauching a young Lady*, whom he is afterwards willing to *marry*, the Siſter of the Party condemn'd comes to intreat for her Brother's Life; when the Judge, *enamour'd* of her, and reflecting with himſelf on the Nature of his wild Deſire, breaks out into this ſententious Reaſoning:

Thieves for their Robberies have Authority,
When Judges ſteal themſelves.

A Sentence ſo plain, as well as beautiful, that it needs no Application.

But to return to my Subject. In Confederacies of this kind, where None are in the Secret but the Parties guilty, it is no eaſy matter to fix their Guilt. Nor can I

think of any Expedient in such Cases, but that common one which is practised towards Highway-men, of *giving Pardon and a Reward to one for discovering the rest of his Gang.* This Encouragement seldom fails of Success; for the same Argument, that prevail'd with them to commit one Roguery, induces them to commit another. The Friendship of Villains, that is always link'd on Self-Interest, is *soon dissolv'd*, when *more* is offer'd for their *Treachery*.

It is, indeed, a Reproach of a long Standing to us, as a Letter in one of our News-Writers too truly observes, that *the Inhabitants of these Islands are more liable to* Bribery, *than any other People under the Sun*; and that no Rank among us has been free from this Taint, seems pretty plain from a Statute there likewise mention'd, and made by *Canutus* the *Dane*, a little before the Conquest; whereby it is enacted, *That if any Judge should take a Fee, he should forfeit his Head to the King.*

I shall transcribe a part of two subsequent Paragraphs, in the abovemention'd Letter; because I think, the Author is not so plain as some of his Readers could wish, in relation to what he says of my Lord *Chief Justice Coke.*

He tells us, 'That at the Assizes holden 'at *Lincoln*, (*Anno* 23, *Ed.* I.) Sir *William Thorpe*, 'Chief Justice of the King's Bench, having 'taken a Bribe of Ninety Pounds from five 'Persons, to stay a Writ of *Exigent* against them;

'them; and being tried for the Bribery, and 'convicted, was sentenc'd *to be hang'd, and have all his Lands and Chattels forfeited.*

'Thus stood the Law in the Time of *Edward* the Third. My Lord *Coke* indeed 'says, *This Precedent ought not to be followed.* 'But as he produces no Act of Parliament 'that has repealed the Statute, (*Anno* 20, *Ed.* I.) 'we may venture to say, *the Law stands so 'at this Day.*——And such as have read the 'Histories of the Times, in which my Lord 'Coke liv'd, will, without much Difficulty, 'find out the Reason, why his Lordship *would 'not have this Precedent follow'd.*'

My Intention is to add a few Words here for the sake of Those, who have either not read the History of those Times, or else may have forgot what they had read in a private Circumstance.

The truth is, Sir *Edward Coke*, the Chief Justice, was himself suspected of having receiv'd a Bribe; for he had heard and determin'd a Cause at the Common Law, and some report there was *Juggling in the Business**. Nor was it an idle Report, as we may find from the Sequel; for the Matter was so aggravated soon after, that my Lord *Coke*, as the same Author informs us, was brought *on his Knees at the Council-Table*, and, among other things objected against him, he was charg'd, *That, while he was the King's Attorney, in the Beginning of his Reign, he had conceal'd a Sta-*

* *Wilson's* Life of King *James* I.

a Statute of Twelve Thousand Pounds, due to the King from the late Lord Chancellor Hatton, *wherein he deceiv'd the Trust reposed in him.**

Whether this Statute were conceal'd *gratis*, and without any Consideration paid for the Service, I shall leave to be determin'd by my Lord *Coke*'s best Friends, and most zealous Defenders.

Yet the Charge of *Bribery* and *Extortion* against the Lord Treasurer *Somerset* was aggravated by this very Lord Chief Justice *Coke*; and the Sentence against him was pronounc'd by my Lord Chancellor *Bacon*, who himself was tainted with the *same Infection*, and not many Years after perish'd in his own Corruption.

It may be objected, perhaps, that all Moneys offer'd and receiv'd for the Execution of his Office in a great Magistrate, are not to be construed a *Bribe*, but a *grateful Acknowledgment* in the Person serv'd, for a just piece of Service done with *proper Dispatch*. This, indeed, was the Plea of a Treasurer and Bishop, *Walter de Langton* in the Reign of King *Edward* the Second. He took of the Earl of *Montealto*, then a Prisoner, a Hundred Pounds to be a Friend to him, and to let him go free to do his Business. Now this Sum was given, as the Record would insinuate, *de Spontanea Voluntate*, &c. for a Gratuity, and for the Courtesy of the Treasurer; but this *sham Colour* was soon thrown off,

* Wilson's *Life of King* James I.

off, and the Bishop adjudg'd guilty of *Extortion* and *Bribery*.

I Cannot forbear here inserting, (because we will have to do with one honest Instance) to the Eternal Honour of Dr. *Williams*, who was a Keeper of the Great Seal, and an Archbishop, * That he was never sullied with the Suspicion of loving Presents, no not so much as *Gratuidad di Guantes*, as the *Spaniards* Phrase is: Large Sums, it was well known, were brought to his Secretaries, such as might have sway'd a Man that was not impregnable; and pressing Solicitations were made, that they would throw them at his Feet for Favours already receiv'd: But no Man durst undertake the Office, as knowing assuredly, *it would displace the Broker, and be his Ruin.*

I have been pretty ample in imbellishing this Discourse with Examples of Persons, who have been guilty both of *private* and *national Briberies* and *Extortions*; and I have shewn occasionly, that it has been the Wisdom of all Reigns, and even where the Parties offending were Minions of the Prince, to call those Persons, who betray'd their Office and the Subject, to the most strict Account.

This brings to my Remembrance † one of the Chapters of *Machiavel*, where he makes it his Topick, that in all well-order'd Governments there ought to be publick Accusations and publick Punishments for those who offend against the People. For, *he says*, there cannot

* *Bp.* Hacket, *in his Life of ABp.* Williams.
† Machiavel *in his Discourses upon* T. Livy.

cannot be a more profitable and necessary Power given to those who are appointed Guardians of the Liberty of a State, than That of accusing Citizens to the People, or to those that represent the People, or to some Magistrate, or Council appointed for that Purpose, whenever they shall offend against the free State.

This Order works two very useful Effects in a Common-wealth; the first is, that wicked and ill-affected Men, for fear of being accused, attempt nothing against the State; or, if they should, they forthwith, without any Respect, are suppressed and punished. The other is, that it gives vent to the Humours that grow in Cities in any manner against any Citizens; and when these Humours have not ordinary Vents, they are apt to break out in violent and extraordinary Manners, and often prove the Ruin of a Common-wealth. But there is not any thing renders a Common-wealth more settled and stedfast, than to ordain it in such a manner, that the Alteration of those Humours, which put it in a Ferment, should have some Out-let appointed by the *Laws*. There are many Examples which evidence this Maxim, but none more than that of *Coriolanus*, as set out by *Livy*.

The Nobility of *Rome* being angry with the People, and disdaining to suffer them to keep that Share which they had in the Government, by the Creation of their Tribunes, who protected them in their Rights, embraced an Opportunity of clipping their Wings of that

Power,

Power, at a Time when the City was in the utmost Want of Provisions, and the Senate had sent to Sicily for Corn. *Coriolanus*, a bold Man, and an inveterate Enemy of the Popular Faction, first ventur'd to advise the Senate, *That this was the Time to chastise the People, and wrest from them that Authority, which so much diminish'd the Power of the Patricians, by keeping them low, by Hunger and Want, and not distributing any Corn to their Relief.*

It is impossible to pass by this Piece of History, without making a short Remark *en passant*; which is, *That it was ever counted a Maxime among Politicians, who design'd to enslave the People, that the first Step towards it was to reduce them to Want and Misery.* And therefore it is no Wonder that wicked Magistrates should always enter upon Measures to impoverish the Nation.

The Populace, it seems, being appriz'd of this Motion of *Coriolanus*, conceiv'd such a violent Hatred against him, that, had not the Tribunes cited him to appear to defend his Cause, they would have torn him to pieces in their Tumult, as he came out of the Senate-House.

But what Mischief might there not have fallen to the Common-wealth of *Rome*, if *Coriolanus* had been slain in a Tumult by the People? This Violence would have been an *Offence to the establish'd Laws*; this Offence would have created a *Fear of Punishment*; and this

* Isocrates de Orationis de Pace.

this *Fear of Punishment* would have united them, in their Defence, to secure themselves by *greater Outrages*: Which, probably, might have ended in the *total Subversion of their civil Rights.*

Now this Example alone is sufficient to prove, That publick Accusations and Punishments are necessary, as well as just, against Those who have *injur'd the People*, tho' it be in Cases which the Wisdom of the Laws had not made penal. A Human Body, if its Constitution be corrupted or impair'd, stands in need of daily Remedies to support it. If a Patient should be afflicted with a new and uncommon Distemper, and his Physician should refuse to apply the Remedy, because this Distemper was not known to *Galen*, or *Hippocrates*; should we not count him very ignorant and foolish? In the same manner a Common-wealth stands in need of the Provision of new Laws, to regulate new Disorders; and accordingly as they are more dangerous, the Remedies must be the stronger. Nor ought the *Quality of the Offenders* to be neglected in the Discipline of the Cure; for what my Lord *Halifax* says of Beggars, may very well be applied to Cheats; where the Poor Ones are only whipt, the Great Ones (out of a proportionable Respect to their Quality) *ought to be hang'd*

SOME

THE

BRITON's

SPEECH

TO

Sir POLITICK

ЭВЕЕСН

THE

BRITON's

SPEECH

TO

Sir *POLITICK.*

THE Day was come, when Freedom long decay'd
Dar'd to lift up, once more, its awful Head,
Reſolv'd, the ſhameful, ſlaviſh, Yoak to break,
That gall'd and fetter'd Fair *Britannia's* Neck.

Mankind, impatient, hung upon the Event,
Each as his diff'rent Inclinations bent:
True Lovers of their Country, *Honeſt, Wiſe*
And *Worthy* Men, ſtood firm againſt th' *Exciſe*;
But thoſe, whom ſervile Principles o'erſway'd,
Courtiers, and *Lawyers*, —*Penſioners* for Bread,
In baſe, ſelf-guided, Scale, th' important
Bus'neſs weigh'd.

Ah, *W*——! where will thy Devices end?
Where wou'd thy ill-preverted Pow'r extend!
And dar'ſt thou boaſt to be thy *Country*'s
Friend?
—Tho' to enormous Bulk we ſee thee grown,
High as thou art, thou may'ſt yet tumble
down;
And vainly ſeek the *Shelter* of a Crown.

Such were the *Spencers*, ſuch proud *Gav'ſton*'s
Mien,
Such was the * *Minion* of the luſtful Queen:

* *Mortimer.*

Theſe,

Theſe, the ſtrong Arm of Juſtice overthrew,
Spite of their Pow'r and Arts;—and ſo may you.

What ſhall I ſay to you, ye hireling Band!
Do ye, for Patriots of your *Country* ſtand?
Are ye the *Guardians* of the *Britiſh* Iſle,
Whoſe Hands, *impure* Gold-Offerings defile!
Are ye ſo baſe, to ſell your People's Right,
For windy Titles of a *Lord* or *Knight*!
Not ſo, your Great Forefathers *Peerſons* fought,
When, againſt *Arbitrary* Kings they fought,
And, *Liberty*, with Blood and Wounds, dear bought.

But, let me turn from this *inglorious* Theme,
To give due Praiſes to thoſe *Sons* of *Fame*;
Thoſe *Generous Spirits*, thoſe *Intrepid Few*,
Who, to the *Nation*'s Intereſt, faſt and true,
No *Bribes* cou'd byaſs, nor no *Pow'r* ſubdue.

Behold

Behold the virtuous *Catoes* of the Age!
See, how, for *Liberty*, they dare engage!
Boldly they ſtem'd a-while the rapid Stream,
And with one, *Honeſt*, Voice, oppos'd the *Scheme*:
They ſpoke, like *Britons* worthy to give Laws,
And, to the laſt, aſſerted, *Freedom*'s Cauſe;
But, when they found, Juſtice to Might muſt yield,
Reluctantly they quit the well-fought Field;
Unconquer'd in their Minds, they ſcorn'd to fear
The *Victor* proud, or his *malicious* Sneer:
Scarce cou'd the riſing Paſſion be ſuppreſt,
And juſt Reſentment heav'd each *Patriot*-Breaſt.

Go, *Worthy* Men, go, juſtly prais'd, by all;
While you ſurvive, *Britannia* cannot fall:

Tho'